

Press Release: June 5, 2019

## MITO SETTEMBREMUSICA 2019

### GEOGRAPHIES

*Great conductors, including Myung-Whun Chung, Yuri Temirkanov,  
Zubin Mehta, Marin Alsop, John Axelrod and Daniele Rustioni*

*Soloists, such as Martha Argerich, Katia and Marielle Labèque, Alexander Romanovsky,  
Olli Mustonen, Giovanni Sollima, Daniel Müller-Schott, Mario Brunello,  
Rachel Harnisch, Nils Mönkemeyer, Sean Shibe, Tine Thing Helseth,  
Alessandro Taverna and Third Coast Percussion*

*Orchestras like the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, featured in our opening concerts,  
the St. Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra,  
The Rai National Symphony Orchestra, La Scala Philharmonic,  
Teatro Regio Orchestra of Torino and the Verdi Orchestra of Milano*

*7 world premieres, 3 European premieres, including Perpetuum by Philip Glass,  
commissioned by MITO SettembreMusica, and 13 Italian premieres*

*Popularly priced tickets and free concerts  
Introductions for enhanced listening*

**Milano – Torino, September 3-19, 2019**  
**128 performances**

A discovery journey in music that explores the places, traditions and languages that have left their marks on the world's cultures. **Geographies** is the theme of the 2019 edition of **MITO SettembreMusica**, the music festival that for 13 years running has brought together host cities Milano and Torino in their commitment to music and community. In today's global society, which has broken down barriers and spurred mobility, traditional concepts like cultural identity and geographical affiliation have been transformed into fluid values that are constantly being redefined. Thus MITO SettembreMusica – which runs **September 3-19** – becomes an opportunity to explore both the repertoires from the many different countries that have made the history of music what it is today, and contemporary production by composers who are the offspring of the new transnational nomadism. A program centered around a theme that's of the utmost relevance in today's world, one that surveys actual physical geography – from Europe to the Americas to the Far East – and explores imaginary locations too, where music is an unbreakable bond between symbolic landscapes, emotions, and spaces bubbling over with life and memory. Once again, MITO SettembreMusica, headed by president **Anna Gastel** and artistic director **Nicola Campogrande**, fills northern Italy's two major urban hubs with music – culture for all of us to share.



“The word *festival* conjures up images of periodical celebrations that ideally bring together a community around an array of events that engage and entertain one and all, breaking down linguistic, cultural and geographical barriers,” declare **Giuseppe Sala, Mayor of Milano, and Chiara Appendino, Mayor of Torino**. “As summer fades, it’s comforting to know that MITO SettembreMusica is there, year after year, enthralling our enthusiastic fans with all its richness.”

**128 performances** in Milano and Torino, **all featuring programs designed especially for the festival** and starring some of the biggest names on the international classical music scene today, as well as the most prestigious acts from our two host cities. A big hit with fans at previous editions, we’re glad to be bringing back our **introductory listening guides** – featuring music experts Gaia Varon and Luigi Marzola in Milano, and Stefano Catucci and Carlo Pavese in Torino – which provide audiences with information and insight for an enhanced listening experience.

Ticket **prices** remain **extremely affordable**. Afternoon and children’s shows feature €5 tickets. Prices for evening performances range from €10 to €30, while tickets for young people ages 14 and under are just €5. Evening concerts outside the center-city circuits feature €3 admission.

“The advent of globalization and digital technology has changed the way we relate to space and time forever,” explains **Artistic Director Nicola Campogrande**. “Indeed, younger generations’ ideas regarding geography are pretty much at odds with the way previous generations saw things. Take, for example, concepts like identity and borders. On the one hand, we have seen the rise of extremist xenophobic platforms, yet on the other hand, in terms of practical, everyday existence, they are ignored and there has been an incredible upsurge in cross-border movement, in both the physical and metaphorical senses. Thus, while it is of great interest to explore artistic production taking place in the here and now, featuring composers and performers that have experienced this new kind of nomadism first-hand, for whom it has become commonplace to work with fellow artists from all corners of the world, it’s still important, and a thrill, to step back and revel in musical endeavors of the past, and recall times when local and national influences bore heavily on cultural expression. With this year’s theme, Geographies, MITO takes us on a journey through space and time, back and forth through history, probing places, traditions, connections and languages – all in terms of music – that have left their mark on so many different cultures across the globe.”

“Great local orchestras combine forces with top-notch players from the world over,” observes **MITO SettembreMusica President Anna Gastel**, “in a festival that boasts an international flavor par excellence, with concerts held at prime center-city venues as well as in outlying locations, providing access to audiences of all levels and strata. A come-on-in to all, for a program that’s of awe-inspiring appeal, and exquisitely calibrated, with ticket prices that can’t be beat.”

MITO SettembreMusica opens in **Milano** on **Tuesday** evening, **September 3**, at **La Scala**, and in **Torino** on **Wednesday** evening, **September 4**, at **Teatro Regio**. The opening program features the **Israel Philharmonic Orchestra**, conducted by **Zubin Mehta**, with **Martha Argerich** on piano. The concert, entitled **Worlds**, introduces the festival’s theme with a juxtaposition of two different universes of sound: Beethoven’s *Concerto No. 2 for piano and orchestra* – monolithic musical architecture that follows the strictest logic – and Berlioz’s *Symphonie fantastique* – which through the composer’s orchestration conceals an autobiographical episode.



This year's program covers a very broad timespan, stretching from Palestrina to Bach, from Händel to Beethoven and Brahms, all the way to the 20<sup>th</sup> century of Gershwin and Bernstein, up to the present day, with performances of **127 pieces by living composers**, including Steve Reich, James MacMillan, Geoffrey King, Chick Corea, Pascal Proust, Gavin Bryars, Caroline Shaw, Rolf Martinsson and Julia Wolfe. We'll also be serving up a host of **world, European and Italian premieres**, including standouts like *Perpetuum* by **Philip Glass**, which was **co-commissioned by MITO** for Third Coast Percussion; *Ouverture en forme d'étoiles* per orchestra by Régis Campo; *Path of Miracles* by Joby Talbot, dedicated to the Santiago de Compostela pilgrimage, and featuring the voices of Tenebrae, conducted by Nigel Short; and the piece *Jook-urr-pa*, composed and performed by cellist Giovanni Sollima. Plus look forward to pieces by Qigang Chen, Chris Rogerson, Jennifer Higdon, Giulio Castagnoli (commissioned by MITO), Tatev Amiryan, Tomislav Šaban, David Skidmore, Devonté Hynes, Raffaele Cifani, Lorenzo Fattambrini, Fela Sowande and Samuel Akpabot.

Breadth in terms of timespan is matched by a remarkable geographical and stylistic variety. We'll be delving into two of Russia's many souls – the tormented melancholy of Tchaikovsky's *Pathétique*, and the pyrotechnics of Rachmaninoff's *Concerto No. 3 for piano* – brought to us by **La Scala Philharmonic**, conducted by **Myung-Whun Chung**, with pianist **Alexander Romanovsky**. The Italian premiere of MacMillan's tender *Larghetto for Orchestra* provides the introduction for the new symphonic geographies of Mahler's "*Titan*", both of which will be performed by the **St. Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra**, conducted by **Yuri Temirkanov**. A Dionysiac take in two works out of Germany from the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries: Orff's *Carmina Burana* and the symphonic poem by Strauss, *Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks*, performed by the **Giuseppe Verdi Choir and Symphony Orchestra of Milano**, under the direction of **Daniele Rustioni**, featuring soloists Zuzana Marková, Antonio Giovannini and Roberto De Candia. The austerity of Brahms' *Mitteleuropa* is the focus of the **Teatro Regio Orchestra of Torino**, with **Marin Alsop** conducting – they're back with us after their stellar performance at last year's opening concert. Brightly colored France, full of verve, rings loud and clear in Saint-Saëns' faunal fantasy *The Carnival of the Animals*, in Poulenc's brilliant *Concerto for two pianos* – both pieces featuring sisters **Katia** and **Marielle Labèque** on piano – and in Campo's *Ouverture en forme d'étoiles*, with all three pieces performed by the **Pomeriggi Musicali Orchestra**, conducted by **Alessandro Cadario**. The American Dream comes to life three times with Dvořák's lively, folk-inspired *Symphony "From the New World"*, Barber's tribute to the angst of a wayward people in *Adagio*, and the Grammy-winning *Viola Concerto* by Jennifer Higdon, who has also been the recipient of a Pulitzer Prize – all three works performed by the **Torino Philharmonic Orchestra**, conducted by **Giampaolo Pretto**, and featuring **Nils Mönkemeyer** on viola. Cellist **Giovanni Sollima** explores classical music's folk roots in interpretations of melodies from Armenia, Trentino, Salento, Sicily and Australia, without forgetting Bach's most iconic Suite. The Grammy-winning group from Chicago **Third Coast Percussion** brings us an overview of new American minimalism, with creations for percussion instruments by composers such as Glass, Reich, Hynes, Bryars and Skidmore. Scottish guitarist **Sean Shibe** explores the history of his native land, back to the 17<sup>th</sup>-century suites for lute that Bach ideally latched onto, and Oswald's 18<sup>th</sup>-century *Divertimento*, all the way to Julia Wolfe's *Lad*, which the contemporary American composer wrote for nine bagpipes – each piece transcribed for electric guitar.

This year MITO is proud to play host to superstar pianists the likes of **Martha Argerich**, sisters **Katia** and **Marielle Labèque**, **Alexander Romanovsky**, **Olli Mustonen** and **Alessandro**



**Taverna.** The list of world-class soloists continues with cellists **Giovanni Sollima**, **Mario Brunello** and **Daniel Müller-Schott**, violist **Nils Mönkemeyer**, guitarist **Sean Shibe**, trumpeter **Tine Thing Helseth**, and **Third Coast Percussion**. Crème de la crème vocalists include sopranos **Rachel Harnisch** and **Zuzana Marková**, baritone **Roberto De Candia**, countertenor **Antonio Giovannini** and the 16 singers of the **Tenebrae** choir.

This year MITO audiences can also look forward to superb performances of sacred music. There's Domenico Scarlatti's "Madrid Mass", which will be performed alongside motets by his father Alessandro, courtesy of **Consort Maghini**, conducted by **Claudio Chiavazza**; and the reconstruction of a mass by Vivaldi will be the centerpiece of a service celebrated at the Church of San Marco in Milano, featuring **Orchestra Barocca Modo Antiquo**, conducted by **Federico Maria Sardelli**, with sopranos **Anna Simboli** and **Elena Bertuzzi**, contralto **Elena Biscuola** and the **Coro Ricercare Ensemble** under the direction of choirmaster **Romano Adami**.

As in past editions, weekends at the festival promise special **performances for children and young people** – a great chance to enjoy some rather unorthodox approaches to making music and musical theater. Don't miss **Warrior Cellists**, starring the Dutch ensemble Cello Octet Amsterdam, whose members are armed with their instruments and head off to battle playing music by Ligeti, Bartók and Glass. Then it's time for a work commissioned by MITO, **Tree Songs**, the story of two children who get lost in the woods and find their way again thanks to the music of Ravel. Last but by no means least, the European debut of the Japanese production **A Beautiful City**, a musical and pictorial journey to cities around the world, conceived and directed by Dario Moretti, with music by Makoto Nomura and Kumiko Yabu. These children's performances have been selected with the aim of giving kids the opportunity to experience music in a way that's surprising and fun, without the pressure of having to learn something.

Among this year's most eagerly awaited MITO events, gear up for **Choir Day**, slated for **Saturday, September 7 in Torino and Sunday, September 8 in Milano**. Singing in chorus is good for your heart and mind, as artistic director Nicola Campogrande is fond of repeating. Each year the program changes, in sync with the festival's lineup. This year's edition features performances by 15 Italian and international choirs, with 10 concerts in all, including the **Friuli Venezia Giulia Choir**, conducted by **Cristiano Dell'Oste**, featuring cellist **Mario Brunello**. That evening, the choirs come together to join the audience and the **Italian Youth Choir** for a sing-along jamboree: **MITO Open Singing**, conducted by **Michael Gohl**, who first turned our audiences on to the pleasure of singing together back in 2016. Look forward to classics and pop hits that even newcomers will delight in.

Milano exclusives: **Brahms Land**, featuring a pair of sonatas for cello and piano – plus the master's "Regenlied Sonate" – which were composed by Brahms twenty years apart, performed for MITO by **Daniel Müller-Schott** and **Olli Mustonen**; a tribute to Africa by the **University of Milano Orchestra**, conducted by **Alessandro Crudele**, and featuring pianist **Alessandro Taverna**. Torino exclusives: Performances from the Torinodanza Festival; and MITO's presentation of **Douce France**, featuring the **Stefano Tempia Academy Choir and Orchestra**, conducted by **Claudio Fenoglio**, with the participation of the **Teatro Regio Children's Choir of Torino** and organist **Francesco Cavaliere**. A discovery journey that opens the doors to some of the most enthralling choral sounds that hail from France at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

MITO draws to a conclusion in Milano on September 18 at Teatro Dal Verme, and in Torino on September 19 at Auditorium Rai, with **Joyful Islands**, a concert featuring the **Rai National**



**Symphony Orchestra**, conducted by **John Axelrod**. Look forward to an exploration of blithe country that kicks off with Debussy's *L'isle joyeuse*, which took its cue from a Watteau painting that depicts young people setting out for the island of love – Bernardino Molinari's arrangement, approved by Debussy. Followed by Qigang Chen's *Joie éternelle*, which exhibits the rarest tenderness, based on a famous Chinese melody, and featuring trumpeter **Tine Thing Helseth** in an Italian premiere. Closing things off with the final Lied, "*Das himmlische Leben*", from Mahler's *Symphony No. 4*, featuring soprano **Rachel Harnisch**.

MITO SettembreMusica is funded by the **Italian Ministry of Culture**, and is produced by **Pomeriggi Musicali of Milano** and the **Torino Foundation for Culture**, with financial support from **host cities Milano and Torino**, along with our indispensable partner **Intesa Sanpaolo**, who's been behind us from the start. Support also comes from **Compagnia di San Paolo** and our sponsors **Iren, Lavazza, Pirelli, CNH Industrial Village, Fondazione Fiera Milano**, and contributions from **Fondazione CRT** and **OGR - Officine Grandi Riparazioni**.

**Rai** continues as our Main Media Partner, along with **Rai Radio 3** and **Rai Cultura**. Renewed Media Partnerships: **La Stampa, Corriere della Sera, Radiotelevisione svizzera – Rete Due**.

[www.mitosettembremusica.it](http://www.mitosettembremusica.it)

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